

System and Method for Automatic Generation of Visual Representations and Links in a Hierarchical Messaging System

Abstract of the Disclosure

[00138] A multimedia message system automatically generates visual representations (thumbnails) of message or media objects and references (links) between media objects; nests messages within themselves; and automatically updates generated thumbnails. An object, including a thumbnail image of the object's contents and a link to the original content, is created in response to simple user inputs or commands. An image of the object is generated whether the object be a web page, a multimedia message, a hypertext link, a video clip, or a document. A link or reference to the original object from which the image was formed is also generated. The system retrieves and displays information referenced by an object and shown by the thumbnail image corresponding to the object. The system also automatically updates the thumbnail image(s) representing an object any time the underlying object or information from which the image was generated has been modified.